THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY) : (a) The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) became functional with effect from 28th September, 2005. The National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) was set up by the Central Government on 16th October, 2003. The Disaster Management Act, 2005 which was enacted on 23rd December, 2005, *inter-alia*, provides that NIDM shall function within the broad policies and guidelines laid down by NDMA. No other Disaster Management Institute has been set up under the aegis of NDMA.

(b) NIDM will be responsible for planning and promoting training and research in the area of disaster management, documentation and development of national level information base relating to disaster management policies, prevention mechanisms and mitigation measures.

(c) NDMA has not co-opted any university for the purpose. However, it has interacted with a number of universities dealing with specific fields of Disaster Management.

(d) NDMA members have visited a large number of States as also various technical/research institutions. NDMA has also organized/participated in more than 25 workshops/conferences on various facets of disaster management.

Amendments in Foreign Trade Policy 2004-09

2556. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced several amendments in the Foreign Trade Policy 2004—2009;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits to accrue to different segments of the economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes Sir, on April 7th 2006, Government announced a number of initiatives through the second Annual Supplement within the overall frame work of the Foreign Trade Policy 2004—09.

(b) Electronic copies of the Annual Supplement and the Foreign Trade Policy are available on the DGFT web-site and can be accessed at http:/ /www.dgft.gov.in/. Copies of these documents are also available in the Parliament Library. Following are the key highlights of the new initiatives:

(i) Focus products and focus market schemes introduced to promote exports of products having large employment potential and penetration of strategic markets by Indian products.

(ii) The export of village and cottage industries products have been incentivised by including these products in the Vishesh Krishi and Gram Udyog Yojana.

(iii) A new Duty Neutralize Scheme called duty free import authorisation scheme has been introduced with the primary objective reducing working capital requirements of exporters who import most of their inputs.

(iv) A number of features have been introduced in the Served from India Scheme to promote Service Exports.

(v) A number of initiatives have been taken to facilitate emergence of India as Gems & Jewellery hub.

(c) Enhancing the competitiveness of Indian exports and generating additional units of employment are the two important themes of Foreign Trade Policy. Since exports have become an important part of Indian economy, high productivity and competitiveness in export sector will benefit the entire economy.

Marine exports

2557. DR. S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any effort has been made to expand the scope of marine exports from the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that MPEDA has not been able to go beyond traditional exports for the last two decades;

(c) what plans and steps does MPEDA have to increase value-added exports from the country; and

(d) the details of the steps taken by MPEDA to arrange inspection facilities for new marine exports and value-added exports from the country?